

Equipping disciples in a non-book culture

Unlock challenges the way the Church has traditionally communicated the good news to ordinary people

Many working class people want to learn about faith, but often find the resources churches use don't relate to their everyday lives and their way of looking at things.

In 1972 the founders of Unlock (or the Evangelical Urban Training Project as it was then called) were concerned that Christians in deprived urban areas were being denied the chance to explore their growing faith for themselves.

There were plenty of resources available but they used middle class vocabulary and middle class examples.

Unlock quickly realised that just because people do not think or learn in bookish ways doesn't mean they are less capable of thinking and learning; it just means they have a different approach.

The charity found that when these urban disciples tell their stories – stories of biblical values lived out in the real world – they provide a fruitful source for theological reflection.

Sonya Doragh, an Unlock development worker in Liverpool, believes individual stories are powerful tools. "Liverpool is a city full of stories; on the bus, in the shop even on the doorstep there's always a moment for a quick tale, often with a punch line!

"What better environment for a method of discipleship that focuses on listening to those stories, finding God's presence in the narrative and seeking a punch line that has an eternal ring about it.

"As the life and energy of this city bursts out of each individual's story so it is a pleasure to explore the energy, passion and beauty of God's stories so vibrantly told in the Bible, ready to leap back to life for those ready to listen."

As well as providing field workers like Sonya in UK cities, Unlock produces tailor-made resources to help people express their insights in creative ways. It also provides training for other organisations so they too are better equipped to 'reveal the Good News of the down-to-earth Christ' – and release life-changing skills and confidence in ordinary men and women.

Unlock, Handsworth Parish Centre, Handsworth Road, Sheffield S13 9BZ
www.unlock-urban.org.uk.